



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/734,887	12/13/2000	Krishna A. Bharat	0026-0004	5677

26615 7590 03/25/2003

HARRITY & SNYDER, LLP
11240 WAPLES MILL ROAD
SUITE 300
FAIRFAX, VA 22030

EXAMINER

SOLAIMAN, SHIREEN I

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2175

DATE MAILED: 03/25/2003

9

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/734,887

Applicant(s)

BHARAT ET AL.

Examiner

Shireen I Solaiman

Art Unit

2175

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 January 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DOV POPOVICI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language. .

3. Claims 1, 2 and 6-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Conklin et al. (U.S. Patent # 6,363,378).

As to claims 1, 8 and 9, Conklin et al. discloses a method, a system and a computer-readable medium containing instructions for controlling at least one processor for providing search results, comprising:

receiving a search query (see column 1, lines 58-59);

retrieving one or more objects in response to the search query (see column 1, lines 34-50, retrieved documents and see fig. 1 retrieval system 100);

determining whether the search query corresponds to at least one query theme of a group of query themes (see column 3, lines 25-30 and column 4, lines 1-8);

Art Unit: 2175

ranking the one or more objects (see column 1, lines 34-50, a ranked list of retrieved documents) based on a result of the determination (see column 1, lines 34-50, search results including the ranked query feedback and a document hit list); and providing the ranked one or more objects (see column 1, lines 34-50, a ranked list of retrieved documents).

As to claim 2, Conklin et al. discloses wherein the objects include web pages (see column 2, lines 10-11, online world wide web).

As to claim 6, Conklin et al. discloses wherein the determining includes: determining whether the search query corresponds to a query rule associated with each query theme (see column 4, lines 1-20, query rule reads on uses the query terms and its linguistic variant to process the query).

As to claim 7, Conklin et al. discloses wherein each query theme is classified into a first set of topics(see column 6, lines 52-64, a focal category is a concept that best reflects the center of conceptual proximity of the topics in a cluster, see fig.6 France is in first set of topics), and wherein the determining includes: classifying the search query into a second set of topics (see fig.6 Places of Interest is in second set of topics), and determining that the search query corresponds to a query theme when the second set of topics relates to the first set of topics associated with that query theme (see fig.6 Eiffel Tower can be reached from both sets of topic through a query).

As to claim 10, Conklin et al. discloses server (see fig. 8) comprising:
a memory configured to store instructions and a group of query themes (see fig. 8, Main memory 1010); and
a processor configured to execute the instructions (see fig. 8, Processor unit 1005) to obtain a search query that includes at least one search term, retrieve one or more objects based on the at least one search term(see column 1, lines 34-50, retrieved documents and see fig. 1 retrieval system 100), determine whether the search query corresponds to at least one of the group of query themes(see column 3, lines 25-30 and column 4, lines 1-8), rank the one or more objects based on whether the search query corresponds to at least one of the group of query themes(see column 3, lines 1-24, ranking for the query feedback terms); and provide the ranked one or more objects (see column 3, lines 1-24, the query feedback terms are then displayed to the user in the order ranked).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 3-5 and 11-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conklin et al. (U.S. Patent # 6,363,378) in view of Chakrabarti et al. (U.S. Patent # 6,356,899).

Art Unit: 2175

As to claim 3, Conklin et al. does not teach determining whether any of the one or more objects relates to a list of favored and non-favored sources.

Chakrabarti et al. teaches determining whether any of the one or more objects relates to a list of favored and non-favored sources (see column 1, lines 30-50, favored reads on example pages and non-favored sources reads on stop pages).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. to include determining whether any of the one or more objects relates to a list of favored and non-favored sources.

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. by the teachings of Chakrabarti et al. to include determining whether any of the one or more objects relates to a list of favored and non-favored sources because "preferred" information elements are considered to have higher relevance to some specific subject matter (see column 2, lines 53-55) and non-favored sources may adversely affects relevance computation accuracy (see column 3, lines 18-19).

As to claim 4, Conklin et al. as modified discloses wherein the ranking includes determining a score for those objects that are unrelated to the list of favored and non-favored sources using a first group of parameters (see column 7, lines 29-67 and column 8, lines 1-46, determines raw and descendent weight).

Conklin et al. as modified does not teach wherein the ranking includes: determining a score for those objects that relate to the list of favored or non-favored sources using the first group of parameters and an editorial opinion parameter; and

Art Unit: 2175

ranking the objects based on determined scores;

Chakrabarti et al. teaches wherein the ranking includes:

determining a score for those objects that relate to the list of favored or non-favored sources (see column 19, lines 1-31 and column 20, lines 7-51) using the first group of parameters and an editorial opinion parameter (editorial opinion parameter reads on authority weight); and ranking the objects based on determined scores (see column 19, lines 30-31).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified wherein the ranking includes: determining a score for those objects that relate to the list of favored or non-favored sources using the first group of parameters and an editorial opinion parameter; and ranking the objects based on determined scores.

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified by the teachings of Chakrabarti et al. wherein the ranking includes: determining a score for those objects that relate to the list of favored or non-favored sources using the first group of parameters and an editorial opinion parameter; and ranking the objects based on determined scores because weights for respective links may be increased to reflect the significance of the link.

As to claim 5, Conklin et al. as modified does not teach wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes the rank of those objects corresponding to favored sources to be increased and a rank of those objects corresponding to non-favored sources to be decreased.

Art Unit: 2175

Chakrabarti et al. teaches wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes the rank of those objects corresponding to favored sources to be increased (see column 2, lines 53-55, higher) and a rank of those objects corresponding to non-favored sources to be decreased (see column 2, lines 53-55 and see fig. 14, delete stop pages from supplemented initial set, 295).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes the rank of those objects corresponding to favored sources to be increased and a rank of those objects corresponding to non-favored sources to be decreased.

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified by the teachings of Chakrabarti et al. wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes the rank of those objects corresponding to favored sources to be increased and a rank of those objects corresponding to non-favored sources to be decreased because authority weight of link within a page may be increased/decreased beyond a default value to reflect relevance (see column 9, lines 30-35).

As to claim 11, Conklin et al. discloses method used in ranking search results, comprising: developing one or more query themes (see Fig. 2, 212 identify themes for the document hit list implies developing, see column 3, lines 25-30 and column 4, lines 1-8).

Conklin et al. does not teach determining an editorial opinion parameter for use in ranking search results identifying, for each query theme, a first set of objects as favored objects; identifying, for each query, a second set of objects as non-favored objects; and

Art Unit: 2175

determining an editorial opinion parameter for each of the objects in the first and second sets.

Chakrabarti et al. teaches determining an editorial opinion parameter for use in ranking search results (editorial opinion parameter reads on authority weight) identifying, for each query, a first set of objects as favored objects (see fig. 14, Were example authorities specified, 289); identifying, for each query, a second set of objects as non-favored objects (see fig. 14, Were stop pages specified, 289); and determining an editorial opinion parameter for each of the objects in the first (see column 8, lines 35-50) and second sets (see fig. 14, delete stop pages from supplemented initial set, 295).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. to include determining an editorial opinion parameter for use in ranking search results identifying, for each query theme, a first set of objects as favored objects; identifying, for each query, a second set of objects as non-favored objects; and determining an editorial opinion parameter for each of the objects in the first and second sets.

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. by the teachings of Chakrabarti et al. to include determining an editorial opinion parameter for use in ranking search results identifying, for each query, a first set of objects as favored objects; identifying, for each query theme, a second set of objects as non-favored objects; and determining an editorial opinion parameter for each of the objects in the first and second sets because the exact authority value for a page is not as significant as approximating the page's authority relative values for ranking purposes (see column 31, lines 11-14).

Art Unit: 2175

As to claim 12, Conklin et al. as modified discloses wherein the determining includes: determining whether the search query corresponds to a query rule associated with each query theme (see column 4, lines 1-20, query rule reads on uses the query terms and its linguistic variant to process the query).

As to claim 13, Conklin et al. as modified discloses determining, for each query theme, one or more topics for determining whether a search query satisfies the respective query theme (see column 6, lines 52-64, a focal category is a concept that best reflects the center of conceptual proximity of the topics in a cluster).

As to claim 14, Conklin et al. as modified discloses wherein the one or more topics are selected from at least one hierarchical directory theme (see column 6, lines 22-32).

As to claim 15, Conklin et al. as modified does not teach wherein the first and second sets of objects are sets of web sites.

Chakrabarti et al. teaches wherein the first and second sets of objects are sets of web sites sources (see column 1, lines 30-50, first set reads on example pages and second set reads on stop pages).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified wherein the first and second sets of objects are sets of web sites.

Art Unit: 2175

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified by the teachings of Chakrabarti et al. wherein the first and second sets of objects are sets of web sites because they represents a valuable and important information resource, including literally hundreds of millions of documents accessed by tens of millions of users daily (see column 12, lines 63-66).

As to claim 16, Conklin et al. as modified does not teach wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes: identifying the first set of objects using host names.

Chakrabarti et al. teaches wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes: identifying the first set of objects using host names (see column 6, lines 2-30 and host names reads on web pages).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes: identifying the first set of objects using host names.

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified by the teachings of Chakrabarti et al. wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes: identifying the first set of objects using host names because they represents a valuable and important information resource, including literally hundreds of millions of documents accessed by tens of millions of users daily (see column 12, lines 63-66).

Art Unit: 2175

As to claim 17, Conklin et al. as modified does not teach wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes identifying the first set of objects using one or more Uniform Resource Locator (URL) prefixes.

Chakrabarti et al. teaches wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes identifying the first set of objects using one or more Uniform Resource Locator (URL) prefixes (see column 17, lines 37-48, links can be URL, web sites or host names).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes: identifying the first set of objects using one or more Uniform Resource Locator (URL) prefixes.

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified by the teachings of Chakrabarti et al. wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes: identifying the first set of objects using one or more Uniform Resource Locator (URL) prefixes because they represents a valuable and important information resource, including literally hundreds of millions of documents accessed by tens of millions of users daily (see column 12, lines 63-66).

As to claim 18, Conklin et al. as modified discloses wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes: classifying each query theme into a set of topics from a hierarchical directory (see column 6, lines 52-64, a focal category is a concept that best reflects the center of conceptual proximity of the topics in a cluster), and identifying host names listed under the set of

Art Unit: 2175

topics as being in the first set of objects for that query theme (see fig. 2 document hit list, 202 and see column 2, lines 10-11, online world wide web surfer is the user implies web sites).

As to claim 19, Conklin et al. as modified does not teach wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes a rank of an object to be increased or decreased based on whether the object is in the first or second set.

Chakrabarti et al. teaches wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes the rank of those objects corresponding to favored sources to be increased (see column 2, lines 53-55, higher) and a rank of those objects corresponding to non-favored sources to be decreased (see column 2, lines 53-55 and see fig. 14, delete stop pages from supplemented initial set, 295).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes the rank of those objects corresponding to favored sources to be increased and a rank of those objects corresponding to non-favored sources to be decreased.

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. as modified by the teachings of Chakrabarti et al. wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes the rank of those objects corresponding to favored sources to be increased and a rank of those objects corresponding to non-favored sources to be decreased because "preferred" information elements are considered to have higher relevance to some specific subject matter (see column 2, lines 53-55) and non-favored sources may adversely affects relevance computation accuracy (see column 3, lines 18-19).

Art Unit: 2175

As to claim 20, Conklin et al. discloses computer-readable medium containing one or more instructions for controlling at least one processor (see fig. 8, Processor unit 1005) to perform a method for use in ranking search results, the method comprising: identifying, for each of a group of search query themes(see column 4, lines 1-8, the query theme vector presents a thematic profile of the content in the query).

Conklin et al. does not teach a first set of objects as favored objects; a second set of objects as non-favored objects; and determining an editorial opinion parameter for each of the objects in the first and second sets of objects.

Chakrabarti et al. teaches determining a first set of objects as favored objects; a second set of objects as non-favored objects (see column 1, lines 30-50, first set reads on example pages and second set reads on stop pages); and determining an editorial opinion parameter for each of the objects in the first and second sets of objects (see column 2, lines 53-55 and see fig. 14, delete stop pages from supplemented initial set, 295).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. to include a first set of objects as favored objects; a second set of objects as non-favored objects; and determining an editorial opinion parameter for each of the objects in the first and second sets of objects.

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. by the teachings of Chakrabarti et al. to include a first set of objects as favored objects; a second set of objects as non-favored objects; and determining an editorial opinion parameter for each of the objects in the first and second sets of objects because "preferred" information elements are considered to have higher relevance to

Art Unit: 2175

some specific subject matter (see column 2, lines 53-55) and non-favored sources may adversely affects relevance computation accuracy (see column 3, lines 18-19).

As to claim 21, Conklin et al. discloses computer-readable medium containing a data structure (see abstract, lines 15-17, documents) comprising:

a query theme field that stores at least one query theme (see column 4, lines 1-8, the query theme vector presents a thematic profile of the content in the query).

Conklin et al. does not teach a favored and non-favored sources field that stores information identifying favored and non-favored web sites for each query; and an editorial parameter field that stores an editorial parameter for each favored and non-favored web site identified in the favored and non-favored sources field.

Chakrabarti et al. teaches a favored and non-favored sources field that stores information identifying favored (see fig. 14, Were example authorities specified, 289) and non-favored web sites (see fig. 14, Were stop pages specified, 289) for each query (query theme field reads on classification); and an editorial parameter field that stores an editorial parameter for each favored and non-favored web site identified in the favored and non-favored sources field (see column 1, lines 30-50, control parameters).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. to include a favored and non-favored sources field that stores information identifying favored and non-favored web sites for each query; and an editorial parameter field that stores an editorial parameter for each favored and non-favored web site identified in the favored and non-favored sources field.

Art Unit: 2175

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Conklin et al. by the teachings of Chakrabarti et al. to include a favored and non-favored sources field that stores information identifying favored and non-favored web sites for each query; and an editorial parameter field that stores an editorial parameter for each favored and non-favored web site identified in the favored and non-favored sources field because "preferred" information elements are considered to have higher relevance to some specific subject matter (see column 2, lines 53-55) and non-favored sources may adversely affects relevance computation accuracy (see column 3, lines 18-19).

As to claim 22, Conklin et al. as modified discloses wherein the at least one query theme includes at least one of a query theme rule and a set of topics from one or more hierarchical directories theme (see column 4, lines 1-20, query rule reads on uses the query terms and its linguistic variant to process the query).

Response to Applicant's Remarks

1. Applicant's arguments submitted on 1/16/2003 with respect to claims 1-22 have been reconsidered but are not deemed persuasive for the reasons set forth below.

Applicant argues (under REMARKS section) that Conklin et al. does not teach or suggest 1) a determining whether the search query corresponds to at least one query theme of a group of query themes and 2) the objects include web pages 3) representative image data found by said search unit. 3) query rule 4) determining whether any of the one or more objects relates to a list of favored and non-favored sources

Art Unit: 2175

Examiner respectfully disagrees. Conklin et al. teaches 1) determining whether the search query corresponds to at least one query theme of a group of query themes because he teaches both theme and text queries, so determining whether the search query corresponds to at least one query theme in implied (see column 3, 65-67 and column 4, 1-8); 2) the objects include web pages because a user is surfing the web in the disclosure 3). query processing a set of rules uses a set of rules to find the query terms and its linguistic variant.

Chakrabarti et al. teaches 4) determining whether any of the one or more objects relates to a list of favored and non-favored sources -- identifying a preliminary population of information elements example pages, stop pages as required—implies that a list of example and stop pages are created and the query is processed against the list.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.


Art Unit: 2175

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shireen I Solaiman whose telephone number is 703-305-5893. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-4:30 M-Thurs.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dov Popovici can be reached on 703-305-3830. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-7239 for regular communications and 703-746-7238 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

SIS
March 20, 2003


DOV POPOVICI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100